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DIGEST OF PERIODICAL LITERATURE

STANDARDS IN ENGLISH

Boston, too, is seeking to define more satisfactorily the standards which the course in English should maintain. In a report by Carolyn M. Gerrish, of the Girls' Latin School, which appears in *Education* for October, will be found a tentative summary of attainment at the end of the elementary-school course and at the end of the high-school course. The first demands the ability to do the following:

1. To copy twelve lines of simple prose or poetry, and a bill of at least seven items. (The end sought is accuracy.)
2. To take down from dictation a passage of simple prose.
3. To write from simple directions a friendly letter or an application for a position.
4. To write within a half-hour a simple, original composition of not less than one page of letter paper, with every sentence grammatically complete.
5. To recognize the parts of speech in their common uses; to explain the construction of words and phrases in a simple sentence containing not more than one phrase modifier in the subject and one phrase modifier in the predicate; to have a practical understanding of the uses to which the dependent clause of a complex sentence can be put—whether it be to serve as noun, adjective, or adverb; to know the principal parts of regular verbs and of the common irregular verbs, and their tense forms through the indicative mood.
6. To read at sight with readiness and good expression simple prose as difficult as *Little Men* or *Hans Brinker*.
7. To quote either orally or in writing fifty lines, not necessarily consecutive, of classic prose or poetry. (The pupil should look upon this not merely as something to be expected of him in the high school but also as a part of his equipment for life.)
8. To stand before the class and talk clearly on some subject of personal, school, or public interest.

A graduate of a high or Latin school should meet the following requirements:

A. He should have ability:

1. To write original compositions—whether they be narration, description, exposition, or simple argument—that are logically planned and so developed as to be conspicuous for unity and coherence. The spelling and grammar should be correct, and the punctuation adequate.

2. To plan coherently and give fluently a five-minute talk on some practical subject on which he has had time to think.

3. To write any common type of business or social letter with technical accuracy and with simplicity and directness.

4. To find and organize material for an original composition of one thousand words upon business, political, historical, literary, or scientific subjects.

5. To read aloud, at sight, with intelligence and clear enunciation, anything from a newspaper to a classic of ordinary difficulty.

6. To tell why a piece of literature (like a standard novel or essay, or a lyric poem such as may be found in the *Golden Treasury*) has merit.

7. To quote either orally or in writing two hundred lines (not necessarily consecutive) of classic prose or poetry.

B. He should have a working knowledge of the course of both English and American literature, of the great names and great books, and of some of the most significant influences in history and life that have molded such literature.

C. In addition to regular prescribed work in literature, he should have read from *A List of Books for Home Reading*, prepared for the Latin and high schools by the English Council, or from the College-Entrance Requirement list: 4 good books of short stories; 5 good novels; 3 good plays; 2 good biographies; 2 good books of history or travel.

MAGAZINES AND THE "MOVIES"

The growing popularity of work with periodicals and the widespread interest in moving pictures demand wise counsel. This is to be found in an article contributed to the April number of the *Bulletin* of the Illinois Association of Teachers of English by Allan Abbott. The writer considers in order the newspapers, magazines, novels, poetry, drama, and the photo-play, seeking in each case to deal with conditions as they are and advocating sympathetic guidance rather than repression or mere adverse criticism. He regards all the study of these contemporary productions as supplementary to, not a substitute for, the study of standard works.

ENGLISH IN TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOLS

Pupils in technical schools present unique problems for the English teacher. So believes Katherine Lyons, of Fall River, Massachusetts. Writing in the *New England Leaflet* for October she declares that both in choice of subject and in method of treatment—particularly in method of treatment—the English course for such pupils must differ from that for

pupils who are going to college. This is not because they are not going to college, but because their background of experience is usually different from those who are. She illustrates by means of the following example. A teacher sought to make clear the word "adapt," which appeared in *Tom Brown's School Days*, by asking, "Did Dr. Arnold talk over the heads of the pupils?" Imagine her surprise at the answer, "No. He spoke from the pulpit."

THE LIBRARY IN THE SCHOOL

The September issue of the *Library Journal* is a school number and contains several articles of absorbing interest to teachers of English. Chief among these are "The Development of the Modern High-School Library," by Mary E. Hall; "The Status of the Library in Southern High Schools," by C. C. Certain; "Teaching the Use of the Library," by Mary Elizabeth Downey; and "Standardization of Library Training in Normal Schools," by a committee of the Library Department of the National Education Association, under the chairmanship of James F. Hosic. The trend is clearly in favor of the well-organized library within the school presided over by a trained librarian or a trained teacher-librarian.

THE CHILDREN'S LIBRARY

A great deal has been written of late about the choice of reading for children but nothing more to the point than the article by Miss Grace Isabel Colbron in the *Bookman* for October. She holds that the attempt to distinguish books for boys from books for girls is largely unnecessary, especially in the case of books really worth while. The period of romanticism continues, she thinks, well on into adolescence, and is there succeeded by serious social interests. Adaptation of great epics is a parlous task, to be attempted by few; such stories might better be rendered orally. The selected list appended is excellent, including standard fairy tales, animal stories, great epics, and a general group composed mainly of prose fiction.